

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3-10, 12-25 and 27-28 were examined by the Office, and in the final Office Action of December 27, 2007 all claims are rejected. With this response new claim 29 is added. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections in view of the following discussion.

This response is submitted along with a Request for Continued Examination (RCE).

Claim Rejections Under § 102

In section 2, on page 4 of the Office Action, claims 1, 3-10, 12-16, 20-25 and 27-28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Setogawa et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,822,024). Applicant respectfully submits that claim 1 is not disclosed or suggested by Setogawa, because Setogawa fails to disclose or suggest all of the limitations recited in claim 1. Setogawa at least fails to disclose or suggest that the video sequence ID is arranged to be used for determining which pictures belong to the same group of pictures, as recited in claim 1. Therefore, for at least this reason, claim 1 is not disclosed or suggested by Setogawa.

Setogawa is related to a method and apparatus for coding a picture sequence, whereby the sequence may comprise I-pictures, P-pictures and B-pictures accommodated as groups of pictures (GOPs). In particular, Setogawa discloses a method of coding groups of pictures where by the pictures within each group are independent from pictures contained within other GOPs. For example, each picture contained within a GOP relies solely on other pictures within the same GOP for prediction thereof. This allows scenes to be cut from the encoded stream at the granularity of a GOP, and the effect of the cut pictures is not propagated into the next proceeding GOP. In order to achieve this effect the method disclosed by Setogawa comprises replacing the picture immediately following a cut scene with that of an I-picture.

In contrast to Setogawa, claim 1 recites that each at least one group of pictures comprises a video sequence ID separate from the picture ID for the encoded pictures, the video sequence ID is the same for each picture of the same group of pictures, and the video sequence ID is arranged to be used for determining which pictures belong to the same group of pictures. The Office asserts that the features of claim 1 identified above are disclosed by the function of the GOP header, and in particular the GOP header field GROUP START CODE. See Setogawa column

7, lines 36-46; Figure 6. In particular, it appears that the Office asserts that the GOP header is equivalent to the video sequence ID recited in claim 1. However, the GOP heading, including the GROUP START CODE, does not correspond to the video sequence ID recited in claim 1. The GROUP START CODE is known in video coding to be a fixed predetermined 32 bit number for all groups, and is used as a marker in order to signify the start of a new GOP. This value cannot therefore be used to determine which pictures belong to the same group of pictures, as is performed by the video sequence ID value from claim 1, since the GROUP START CODE lacks the ability to vary from one group of pictures to the next. Instead, the GROUP START CODE would identify every picture as being part of every group of pictures. Therefore, the GROUP START CODE and the GOP heading cannot correspond to the video sequence ID recited in claim 1. By using the video sequence ID separate from the picture ID there is no requirement to maintain a check on the picture stream to prevent a specific GOP as the sequence ID is able to identify which picture belongs to the same group of pictures. For at least the reasons discussed above, claim 1 is not disclosed or suggested by the cited references.

Independent claims 6, 8-10, 12, 16, 20, 22-25 and 27-28 contain limitations similar to claim 1, and therefore for at least for the reasons discussed above in relation to claim 1, these independent claims are not disclosed or suggested by Setogawa.

The claims depending from the independent claims listed above are also not disclosed or suggested by Setogawa at least in view of their dependencies.

Claim Rejections Under § 103

In section 5, on page 8 of the Office Action, claims 17 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Setogawa in view of Bigham et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,677,905). Claims 17 and 19 ultimately depend from independent claim 16, and Bigham fails to make up for the deficiencies in the teachings of Setogawa identified above. Therefore, claims 17 and 19 are not disclosed or suggested by the cited references at least in view of their dependencies.

In section 6, on page 9 of the Office Action, claim 18 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Setogawa in view of Watkins (U.S. Publ. Appl. No. 2004/0039796).

Claim 18 ultimately depends from independent claim 16, and Watkins fails to make up for the deficiencies in the teachings of Setogawa identified above. Therefore, claim 18 is not disclosed or suggested by the cited references at least in view of its dependency.

New Claim 29

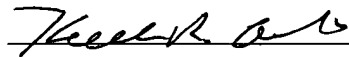
New claim 29 ultimately depends from independent claim 27, and therefore is believed to be novel and nonobvious over the cited references at least in view of its dependency.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited. The undersigned hereby authorizes the Commissioner to charge Deposit Account No. 23-0442 for any fee deficiency required to submit this response.

Respectfully submitted,

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